

Neo-Classicism

Overview of Neo-Classicism

- \$ Art produced in Europe and North America from the mid-18c to the early 19c.
- \$ More than just an antique revival → a reaction against the surviving heavy and fussy Baroque & Rococo styles.
- \$ Linked to contemporary political events:
 - S Revolutions established republics in France and in America. [Neo-Classicism was adapted as the official art style].
 - S Association with the democracy of Greece and the republicanism of Rome.
 - S Napoleon → used the style for propaganda.

Origins of Neo-Classical Art

1. Excavations of the Ruins of Italian Cities



Herculaneum in 1738.

Pompeii in 1748.



2. Publication of Books on Antiquity

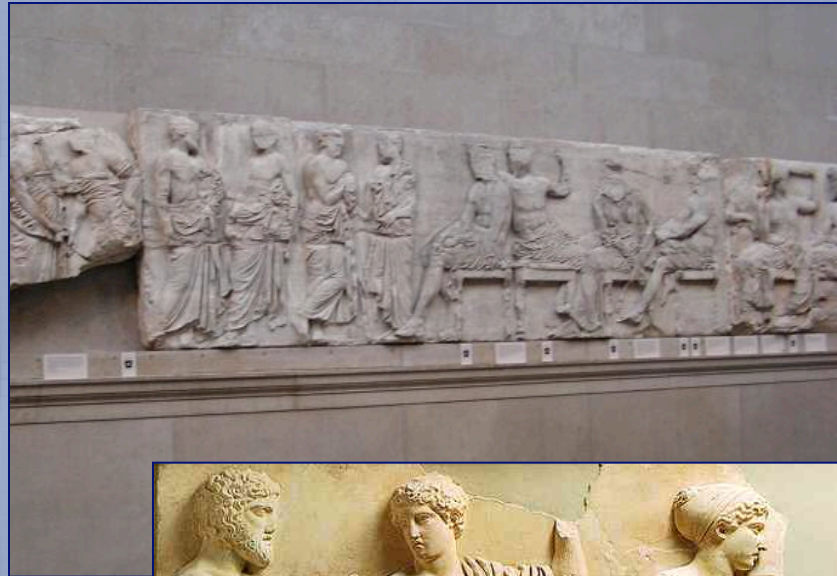


James Stuart & Nicholas Revert
Antiquities in Athens: 1762-1816.

3. Arrival of the Elgin Marbles



Thomas Bruce,
7th Lord of Elgin
British Museum, 1806



From the top façade of the
Parthenon in Athens.

4. Johann Winckelmann's Artists Circle



German art historian.

- \$ Artists should “imitate” the timeless, ideal forms of the classical world.
- \$ A circle of international artists gathered about him in the 1760s in Rome.

Characteristics of Neo-Classicism

- \$ Return to the perceived “purity” of the arts of Rome.
- \$ Model the “ideal” of the ancient Greek arts and, to a lesser, extent, 16c Renaissance classicism.
- \$ A conviction that there is a permanent, universal way things are (and should be), which obviously entails fundamental political and ethical commitments.
- \$ Sometimes considered anti-modern or even reactionary.

Neo-Classical Architecture

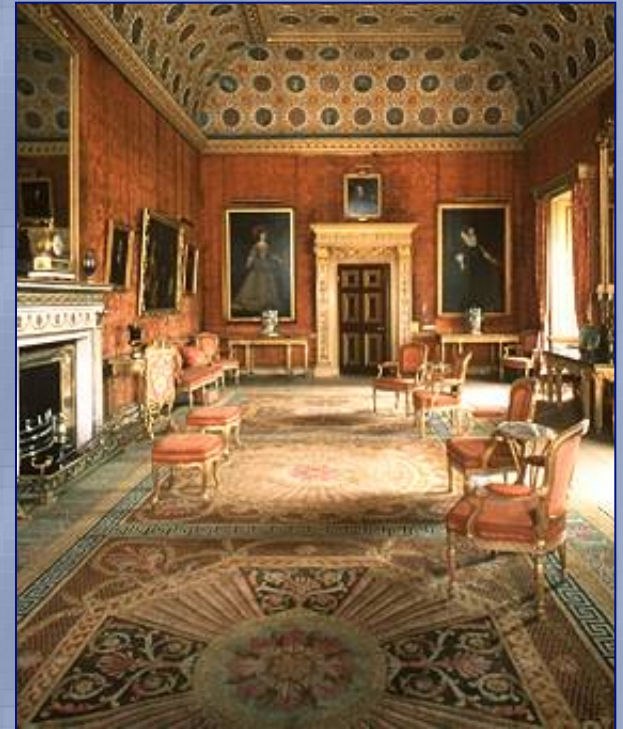
Robert Adam



Scottish architect
& designer



Syon House
1760s



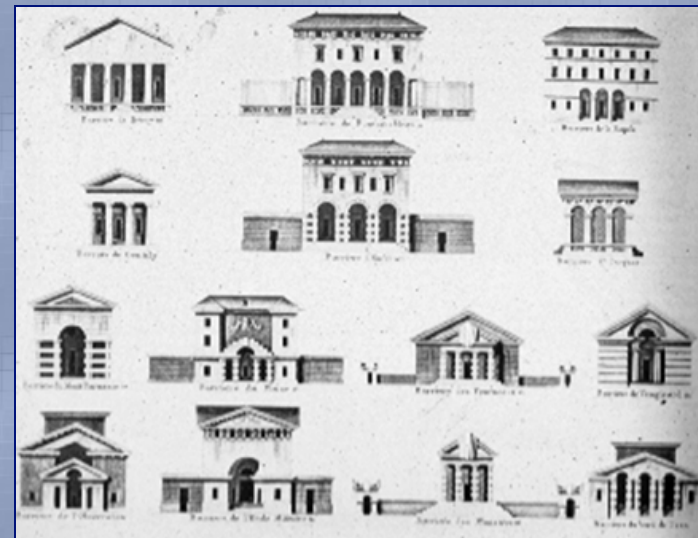
Syon House
The Red Salon

Claude Nicholas Ledoux

\$ Designed a pavilion in 1771 for the Comtesse du Barry at Louveciennes.



\$ Designed a series of city gates for Paris (1785-1789).



Claude Nicholas Ledoux



Rotunde de la Villette, Paris

John Wood



“The Royal Crescent [Circus]” at Bath, England (1754).

The “Empire Style”:

Charles Percier & Pierre François
Léonard Fontaine



\$ Napoleon's official architects.

\$ They remade Paris in the intimidating opulence of Roman imperial architectural style.

Greek-Inspired Architecture



**Bank of England Rotunda
Sir John Soane, 1796**



**British Museum Portico
Sir Robert Smirke,
1823-1847**

The “Federal Style” in America

\$ 1780 - 1820.

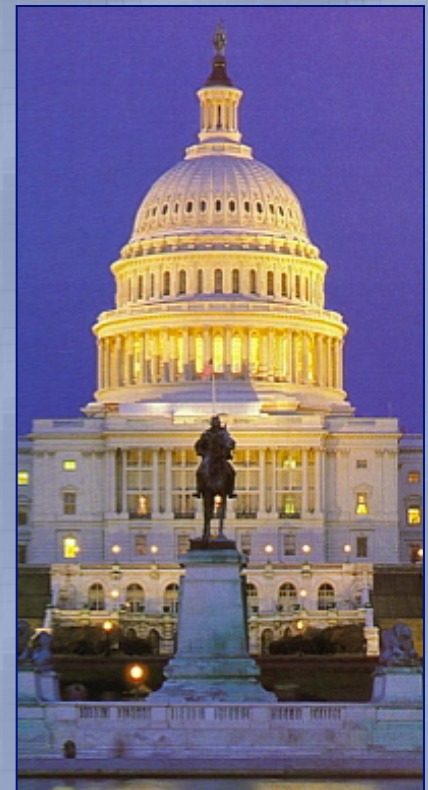
\$ Thomas Jefferson's influence.



Monticello, VA



University of VA



U. S. Capitol

The “Greek Revival Style” in America



Second Bank of the US
Philadelphia, 1824



Neo-Classical Painting

“Parnassus”

Anton Raphael Mengs, 1761



Mengs was the leading artist of early Neo-Classicism.

“The Oath of Brutus”

Gavin Hamilton, 1767



The oath was sworn as a promise of individual revenge against a corrupt monarchy.

“The Death of Socrates”

Jacques-Louis David, 1787



The death of Socrates was a symbol of republican virtue.

“The Oath of the Horatii”

Jacques-Louis David, 1784



A depiction of dutiful patriotism.

“The Consecration of Napoleon & Josephine”



A very different theme:
The celebration of worldly splendor and power.

“The Apotheosis of Homer”

Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres, 1827



This assembly of great artists and writers of all ages gathered to honor the ancient Greek poet before a classical temple.

“Romulus—Victory over Acron”

Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres,
1812



Painted for Napoleon's palace in Rome.

“The Sabine Women”

Jean Auguste Ingres, 1799



Neo-Classical Sculpture

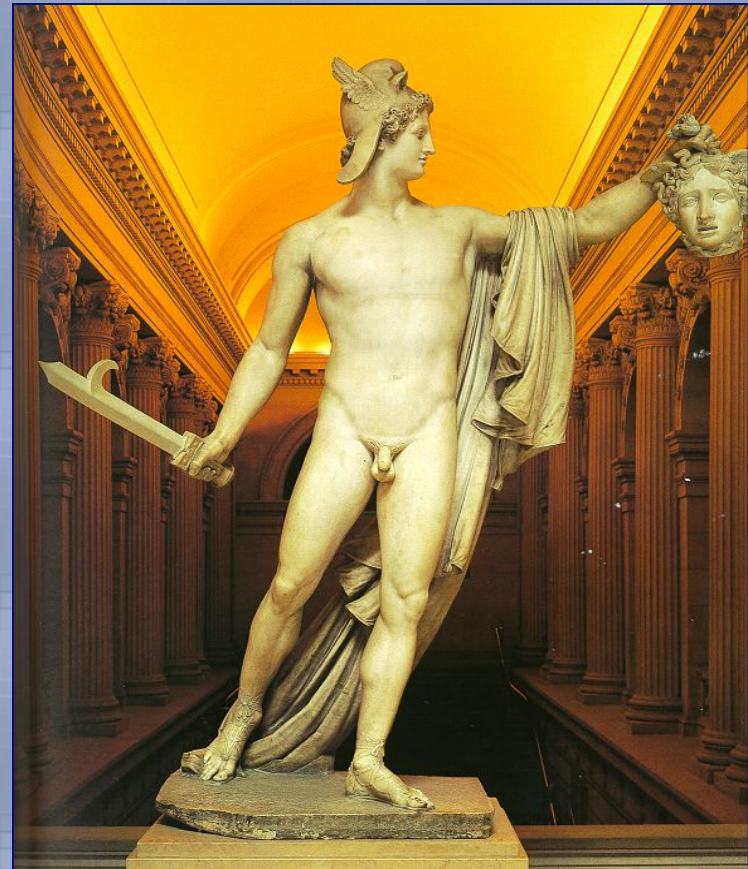
Neo-Classical Sculpture

- \$ Profoundly influenced by ancient art since the Renaissance.
- \$ Neo-Classical sculptors avoided the dramatic twisting poses and colored marble surfaces characteristic of late Baroque and Rococo sculpture.
- \$ They preferred:
 - S Crisp contours.
 - S A noble stillness.
 - S Idealized white marble forms.

Antonio Canova



"Apollo Crowning Himself," 1781



"Perseus with the Head of Medusa," 1804-1806

Antonio Canova



“Paulina Bonaparte,” 1808

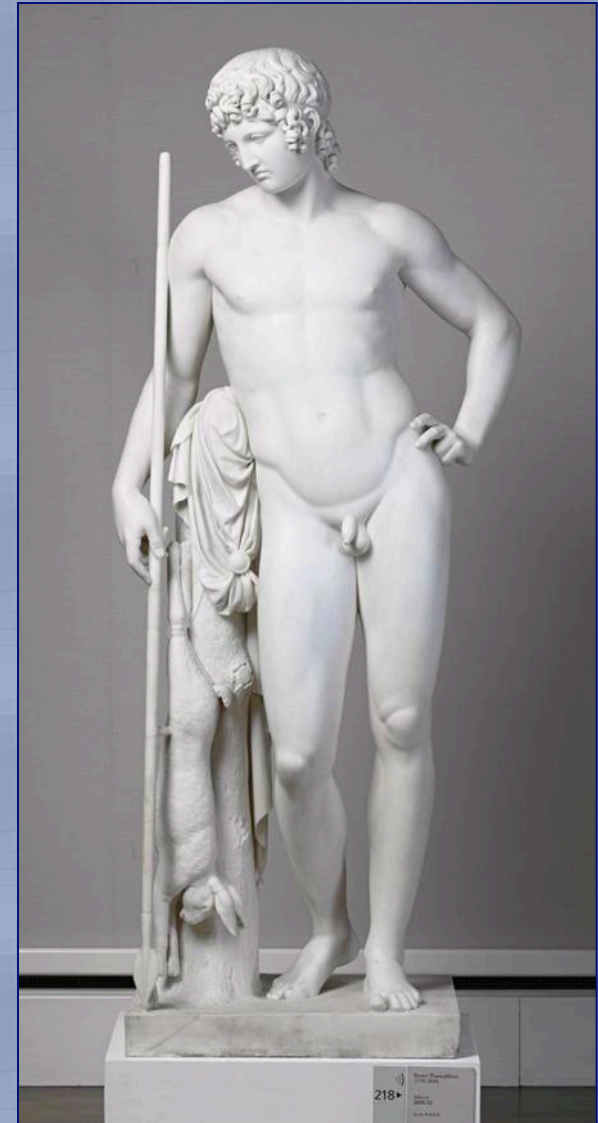


“Hercules”

Bertel Thorvaldsen



**"Jason,"
1803-1823**



"Adonis," 1808-1832

Neo-Classical Decorative Arts

Furniture

- \$ The furniture designs used Greco-Roman motifs.
- \$ Became known as *style étrusque* ["Etruscan style"] in France.
- \$ Were favored by the court of Louis XV and later by Napoleon I.



Josiah Wedgwood



Greek vases found in excavations became models for this new type of ceramics.

Neo-Classicism Continued Into the 19c and Beyond....



Brandenburg Gate, Berlin



Buckingham Palace, London



The Gate of Alcala, Madrid

\$ By the mid-19s, several European cities were transformed into veritable museums of Neo-Classical architecture.

American “Renaissance” Movement

American Museum
of Natural History



National Gallery of Art



Lincoln Memorial



\$ A Neo-Classical expression in Beaux-Arts architecture.

The “Sunset” of Neo-Classicism

\$ Sir Edwin Lutyen → a monumental city plan for New Delhi during the British Raj.



Rashtrapati Bhavan
[President's House]



India Gate Monument

Ms. Susan M. Pojer
Horace Greeley HS Chappaqua, NY